

OXFORD

INTERNATIONAL
AQA EXAMINATIONS

CENTRE POLICY

For International GCSEs and AS/A-levels for May/June 2021

April 2021

V1.0

CENTRE POLICY FOR DETERMINING ASSESSED GRADES IN MAY/JUNE 2021

Background

Every school is required to create a Centre Policy that reflects its individual circumstances. It is anticipated that you may choose to adopt this pre-populated template in full. Or you may choose to make amendments – adding or deleting material – to reflect your own practices. In any case, schools must understand and actively implement the centre policy adopted, although this template is provided for information and does not constitute legal advice. This document must be uploaded to Sharefile by 23 April.

Please note that OxfordAQA will accept Centre Policies presented in other formats as long as they answer all of the questions presented in this template. You will be required to submit a Summary of Centre Policy form alongside this document that can be found on the [May/June 2021 guidance page on the OxfordAQA website](#).

The template is written with a minimal amount of content in [brackets] that can be deleted, and material in CAPITAL LETTERS that should be added, if the content is retained as part of your policy.

Your policy must take account of the guidance provided in the document: [OxfordAQA Guidance on the determination of grades for AS/A-levels and GCSEs for May/June 2021](#)

Centre Policy for determining teacher assessed grades – May/June 2021: GEMS Founders School, Dubai (96065)

Centre Policy for determining teacher assessed grades – May/June 2021:
GEMS Founders School, Dubai (96065)

Statement of intent

This section outlines the purpose of this document in relation to our school.

Statement of Intent

This section provides details of the purpose of this document, as appropriate to our school:

The purpose of this policy is:

- *To ensure that assessed grades are determined fairly, consistently, free from bias and effectively within and across departments.*
- *To ensure the operation of effective processes with clear guidelines and support for staff.*
- *To ensure that all staff involved in the processes clearly understand their roles and responsibilities.*
- *To support teachers to take evidence-based decisions in line with [OxfordAQA guidance on the determination of grades](#).*
- *To ensure the consideration of historical school data in the process, and the appropriate decision making in respect of, assessed grades.*
- *To support a high standard of internal quality assurance in the allocation of assessed grades.*
- *To support our school in meeting its obligations in relation to equality legislation.*
- *To ensure our school meets all requirements set out by OxfordAQA for May/June 2021 qualifications.*
- *To ensure the process for communicating to students and their parents/carers how they will be assessed is clear, in order to give confidence.*

Roles and responsibilities

This section of our Centre Policy outlines the personnel in our school who have specific roles and responsibilities in the process of determining assessed grades this year.

Roles and Responsibilities

This section gives details of the roles and responsibilities within our school:

Head of Centre

- *Our Head of Centre, Mr. Matthew Burfield, will be responsible for approving our policy for determining assessed grades.*
- *Our Head of Centre has overall responsibility for GEMS Founders School, Dubai (96065) as an examinations centre and will ensure that clear roles and responsibilities of all staff are defined.*
- *Our Head of Centre will confirm that assessed grade decisions represent the academic judgement made by teachers and that the checks in place ensure these align with the guidance on standards provided by OxfordAQA.*
- *Our Head of Centre will ensure a robust internal quality assurance process has been produced and signed-off in advance of results being submitted.*

Senior Leadership Team and Heads of Department

Our Senior Leadership Team and Heads of Departments will:

- *provide training and support to our other staff.*
- *support the Head of Centre in the quality assurance of the final assessed grades.*
- *ensure an effective approach within and across departments and authenticating the preliminary outcome from single teacher subjects.*
- *be responsible for ensuring staff have a clear understanding of the internal and external quality assurance processes and their role within it.*
- *ensure that all teachers within their department make consistent judgements about student evidence in deriving a grade.*
- *ensure all staff conduct assessments under the appropriate levels of control with reference to guidance provided by OxfordAQA.*
- *ensure teachers have the information required to make accurate and fair judgments.*
- *ensure that a Head of Department Checklist is completed for each qualification that they are submitting.*

Teachers / Specialist Teachers / Special Needs experts

Our teachers, specialist teachers and Special Needs experts will:

- *ensure they conduct assessments under our school's appropriate levels of control and have sufficient evidence, in line with this Centre Policy and guidance from OxfordAQA, to provide assessed grades for each student they have entered for a qualification.*
- *ensure that the assessed grade they assign to each student is a fair, valid and reliable reflection of the assessed evidence available for each student.*
- *make judgements based on what each student has been taught and what they have been assessed on, as outlined in the section on grading in the main OxfordAQA guidance.*
- *produce an Assessment Record for each subject cohort, that includes the nature of the assessment evidence being used, the level of control for assessments considered, and any*

other evidence that explains the determination of the final assessed grades. Any necessary variations for individual students will also be recorded.

- *securely store and be able to retrieve sufficient evidence to justify their decisions.*

Examinations Officer

Our Examinations Officer will:

- *be responsible for the administration of our final assessed grades and for managing the post-results services.*

Training, support and guidance

This section of our Centre Policy outlines the training, support and guidance that our centre will provide to those determining teacher assessed grades this year.

Training

This section provides details of the approach our school will take to *training, support and guidance in determining assessed grades this year*

- *Teachers involved in determining grades in our school will attend any school-based training to help achieve consistency and fairness to all students.*
- *Teachers will engage fully with all training and support that has been provided by OxfordAQA.*

Support for teachers less familiar with assessment

This section provides details of our approach to *training, support and guidance for teachers less familiar with assessment*

- *We will provide mentoring from experienced teachers to teachers less familiar with assessment.*
- *We will put in place additional internal reviews of assessed grades for teachers less familiar with assessment as appropriate.*

Use of appropriate evidence

This section of our Centre Policy indicates how our school will give due regard to the section in the [OxfordAQA guidance on the determination of grades](#): Guidance on grading for teachers.

A. Use of evidence

This section gives details in relation to our use of evidence.

- *Teachers making judgements will consider the [OxfordAQA Head of Centre guidance on recommended evidence](#), and further guidance provided by OxfordAQA.*
- *All student evidence used to determine assessed grades, and associated documentation, will be retained and made available for the purposes of external quality assurance and appeals.*
- *We will be using student work produced in response to assessment materials provided by OxfordAQA, including groups of questions, past papers or similar materials such as practice or sample papers.*
- *We will use non-exam assessment work (often referred to as coursework), even if this has not been fully completed.*
- *We will use student work produced in school-set tasks that reflect the specification, that follow the same format as OxfordAQA materials, and have been marked in a way that reflects OxfordAQA mark schemes.*
- *We will use substantial class or homework (including work that took place during remote learning).*
- *We will use internal tests taken by students.*
- *We will use mock exams taken over the course of study.*

We provide further detail in the following areas:

Additional Assessment Materials (AAM)

- *We will use additional assessment materials to give students the opportunity to show what they know, understand or can do in an area of content that has been taught but not yet assessed.*
- *We will use additional assessment materials to give students an opportunity to show improvement, for example, to validate or replace an existing piece of evidence.*
- *We will use additional assessment materials to support consistency of judgement between teachers or classes by giving everyone the same task to complete.*
- *We will combine and/or remove elements of questions where, for example, a multi-part question includes a part which focuses on an element of the specification that hasn't been taught.*

Our school will ensure the appropriateness of evidence and balance of evidence in arriving at grades in the following ways:

- We will consider the level of control under which an assessment was completed, for example, whether the evidence was produced under supervision or at home.*
- We will ensure that we are able to authenticate the work as the student's own, especially where that work was not completed within the school. We will use a student honour agreement to support this process*
- We will consider the limitations of assessing a student's performance when using assessments that have been completed more than once, or drafted and redrafted, where this is not a skill being assessed.*
- We will consider the specification and assessment objective coverage of the assessment.*
- We will consider the depth and breadth of knowledge, understanding and skills assessed, especially higher order skills within individual assessments.*

Determining assessed grades

This section of our Centre Policy outlines the approach our school will take to awarding assessed grades.

Awarding assessed grades based on evidence

We give details here of our school's approach to awarding assessed grades.

- Our teachers will determine grades based on evidence which aligns with the standard at which a student is performing, i.e. their demonstrated knowledge, understanding and skills across the content of the course they have been taught.*
- Our teachers will record how the evidence was used to arrive at a fair and objective grade, which is free from bias.*
- Our teachers will produce an Assessment Record for each subject cohort and will share this with their Head of Department. Any necessary variations for individual students will also be shared.*

Internal quality assurance

This section of our Centre Policy outlines the approach our school will take to ensure internal standardisation of assessed grades, to ensure consistency, fairness and objectivity of decisions.

Head of Centre Internal Quality Assurance and Declaration

Internal quality assurance

This section gives details of our approach to internal standardisation, within and across subject departments.

- *We will ensure that all teachers involved in providing assessed grades read and understand this Centre Policy document.*
- *In subjects where there is more than one teacher and/or class in the department, we will ensure that our school carries out an internal standardisation process.*
- *We will ensure that all teachers are provided with training and support to ensure they take a consistent approach to:*
 - *Arriving at assessed grades*
 - *Marking of evidence*
 - *Reaching a holistic grading decision*
 - *Applying the use of grading support and documentation*
- *We will conduct internal standardisation across all grades.*
- *We will ensure that the Assessment Record will form the basis of internal standardisation and discussions across teachers to agree the awarding of assessed grades.*
- *Where necessary, we will review and reflect on individual grading decisions to ensure alignment with the standards as outlined by OxfordAQA.*
- *Where appropriate, we will amend individual grade decisions to ensure alignment with the standards as outlined by OxfordAQA.*
- *Where there is only one teacher involved in marking assessments and determining grades, then the output of this activity will be reviewed by an appropriate member of staff within the school.*
 - *This will be (Head of Department and Senior Leadership Team)*
- *In respect of equality legislation, we will consider the range of evidence for all students that are included in our internal standardisation.*

Comparison of teacher assessed grades to results for previous cohorts

This section of our Centre Policy outlines the approach we will take to compare our assessed grades in 2021 with results from previous cohorts.

OxfordAQA is aware that this might not be possible for all schools or all subjects – please complete this section if you have access to historical data. If you do not have access to historical data, please indicate that below.

Comparison of Assessed Grades to results for previous cohorts

This section gives details of our internal process to ensure a comparison of assessed grades at qualification level to results for previous cohorts in our school taking the same qualification.

- *We will compile information on the grades awarded to our students in past May/June series in which exams took place.*
- *We will consider the size of our cohort from year to year.*
- *We will consider the stability of our school's overall grade outcomes from year to year.*
- *We will consider both subject and school level variation in our outcomes during the internal quality assurance process.*
- *We will prepare a short narrative on the outcomes of assessed grades against historic data once we have this data available. In the event of significant difference to the qualification-levels profiles attained in previous examined years, we will address the reasons for this difference. This commentary will be available for subsequent review during the QA process.*

This section gives details of the approach our school will follow if our initial assessed grades for a qualification are viewed as overly lenient or harsh compared to results in previous years.

- *We will bring together other data sources that will help to quality assure the grades we intend to award in 2021.*

This section gives details of changes in our cohorts that need to be reflected in our comparisons.

- *We will omit subjects that we no longer offer from the historical data.*

Access Arrangements and Special Considerations

This section of our Centre Policy outlines the approach our school will take to provide students with appropriate access arrangements and take into account mitigating circumstances in particular instances.

Reasonable adjustments and mitigating circumstances (special consideration)

This section gives details of our approach to access arrangements and mitigating circumstances (special consideration).

- *Where students have agreed access arrangements or reasonable adjustments (for example a reader or scribe) we will make every effort to ensure that these arrangements are in place when assessments are being taken.*
- *Where an assessment has taken place without an agreed reasonable adjustment or access arrangement, we will remove that assessment from the basket of evidence and alternative evidence obtained.*
- *Where illness or other personal circumstances might have affected performance in assessments used in determining a student's standard of performance, we will take account of this when making judgements.*
- *We will record, as part of the Assessment Record, how we have incorporated any necessary variations to take account of the impact of illness or personal circumstances on the performance of individual students in assessments.*
- *To ensure consistency in the application of Special Consideration, we will ensure all teachers have read and understood the document: [OxfordAQA Policies and Procedures for Special Consideration](#)*

Addressing disruption/differentiated lost learning (DLL)

B. Addressing Disruption/Differentiated Lost Learning (DLL)

This section gives details of our approach to address disruption or differentiated lost teaching.

- Assessed grades will be determined based on evidence of the content that has been taught and assessed for each student.

Objectivity

This section of our Centre Policy outlines the arrangements in place to ensure [objectivity of decisions](#).

Objectivity

This section gives a summary of the arrangements in place within our school in relation to objectivity.

Staff will fulfil their duties and responsibilities in relation to relevant equality and disability legislation.

Senior Leaders, Heads of Department and Centre will consider:

- *sources of unfairness and bias (situations/contexts, difficulty, presentation and format, language, conditions for assessment, marker preconceptions);*
- *how to minimise bias in questions and marking and hidden forms of bias); and*
- *bias in teacher assessed grades.*

To ensure objectivity, all staff involved in determining assessed grades will be made aware that:

- *unconscious bias can skew judgements;*
- *the evidence presented should be valued for its own merit as an indication of performance and attainment;*
- *assessed grades should not be influenced by students' positive or challenging personal circumstances, character, behaviour, appearance, or socio-economic background*
- *unconscious bias is more likely to occur when quick opinions are formed; and*

Our internal standardisation process will help to ensure that there are different perspectives to the quality assurance process.

Recording decisions and retention of evidence and data

This section of our Centre Policy outlines our arrangements to recording decisions and to retaining evidence and data.

C. Recording Decisions and Retention of Evidence and Data

This section outlines our approach to recording decisions and retaining evidence and data.

- *We will ensure that teachers and Heads of Departments maintain records that show how the assessed grades process operated, including the rationale for decisions in relation to individual marks/grades.*
- *We will ensure that evidence is maintained across a variety of tasks to develop a holistic view of each student's demonstrated knowledge, understanding and skills in the areas of content taught.*
- *We will put in place recording requirements for the various stages of the process to ensure the accurate and secure retention of the evidence used to make decisions.*
- *We will comply with our obligations regarding data protection legislation.*
- *We will ensure that the grades accurately reflect the evidence submitted.*
- *We will ensure that evidence is retained electronically or on paper in a secure school-based system that can be readily shared with OxfordAQA.*

Authenticating evidence

D. Authenticating evidence

This section of our Centre Policy details the mechanisms in place to ensure that teachers are confident in the authenticity of evidence, and the process for dealing with cases where evidence is not thought to be authentic.

- *Robust mechanisms will be in place to ensure that teachers are confident that work used as evidence is the students' own and that no inappropriate levels of support have been given to students to complete it, either within the school or with external tutors.*
- *It is understood that OxfordAQA will investigate instances where it appears evidence is not authentic. We will follow all guidance provided by OxfordAQA to support these determinations of authenticity.*

Confidentiality, malpractice and conflicts of interest

Confidentiality

This section of our Centre Policy outlines the measures in place to ensure the confidentiality of the grades our school determines, and to make students aware of the range of evidence on which those grades will be based.

A. Confidentiality

This section details the measures in place in our school to maintain the confidentiality of grades, while sharing information regarding the range of evidence on which the grades will be based.

- *All staff involved have been made aware of the need to maintain the confidentiality of assessed grades.*
- *All teaching staff have been briefed on the requirement to share details of the range of evidence on which students' grades will be based, while ensuring that details of the final grades remain confidential.*
- *Relevant details from this Policy, including requirements around sharing details of evidence and the confidentiality requirements, have been shared with parents/guardians.*

Malpractice

This section of our Centre Policy outlines the measures in place to prevent malpractice and other breaches of exam regulations, and to deal with such cases if they occur.

B. Malpractice

This section details the measures in place in our school to prevent malpractice and, where that proves impossible, to handle cases in accordance with OxfordAQA's requirements.

- *Our general school policies regarding malpractice, maladministration and conflicts of interest have been reviewed to ensure they address the specific challenges of delivery in May/June 2021.*
- *All staff involved have been made aware of these policies, and have received training in them as necessary.*
- *All staff involved have been made aware of the specific types of malpractice which may affect the May/June 2021 series including:*
 - *breaches of internal security;*
 - *deception;*
 - *improper assistance to students;*
 - *failure to appropriately authenticate a student's work;*
 - *over direction of students in preparation for common assessments;*
 - *allegations that schools submit grades not supported by evidence that they know to be inaccurate;*
 - *schools enter students who were not originally intending to certificate a grade in the May/June 2021 series;*
 - *failure to engage as requested with OxfordAQA during the External Quality Assurance and appeal stages; and*
 - *failure to keep appropriate records of decisions made and assessed grades.*

- *The consequences of malpractice or maladministration as published in the JCQ guidance: [JCQ Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures](#) and including the risk of a delay to students receiving their grades, up to, and including, removal of school status have been outlined to all relevant staff.*

Conflicts of Interest

This section of our Centre Policy outlines the measures in place to address potential conflicts of interest.

C. Conflicts of Interest

This section details our approach to addressing conflicts of interest, and how we will respond to such allegations.

- *To protect the integrity of assessments, all staff involved in the determination of grades must declare any conflict of interest such as relationships with students to our Head of Centre for further consideration.*
- *Our Head of Centre will take appropriate action to manage any conflicts of interest arising with school staff in accordance with the [OxfordAQA Conflict of Interest Guidance](#)*
- *We will also carefully consider the need if to separate duties and personnel to ensure fairness in later process reviews and appeals.*

External Quality Assurance

This section of our Centre Policy outlines the arrangements in place to comply with OxfordAQA's arrangements for External Quality Assurance of assessed grades in a timely and effective way.

A. External Quality Assurance

This section outlines the arrangements we have in place to ensure the relevant documentation and assessment evidence can be provided in a timely manner for the purposes of External Quality Assurance sampling, and that staff can be made available to respond to enquiries.

- *All staff involved have been made aware of OxfordAQA's requirements for External Quality Assurance as set out in the [OxfordAQA guidance on the determination of grades](#).*
- *All necessary records of decision-making in relation to determining grades have been properly kept and can be made available for review as required.*
- *All student evidence on which decisions regarding the determination of grades has been retained and can be made available for review as required.*
- *Instances where student evidence used to decide assessed grades is not available, for example where the material has previously been returned to students and cannot now be retrieved, will be clearly recorded on the appropriate documentation.*
- *All staff involved have been briefed on the requirement to engage fully with OxfordAQA during the different stages of the External Quality Assurance process and can respond promptly and fully to enquiries, including attendance at Virtual Visits.*
- *Arrangements are in place to respond fully and promptly to any additional requirements/reviews that may be identified as a result of the External Quality Assurance process.*
- *Staff have been made aware that a failure to respond fully and effectively to such additional requirements may result in further action by OxfordAQA, including the withholding of results.*

Results

This section of our Centre Policy outlines our approach to the receipt and issue of results to students and the provision of necessary advice and guidance.

A. Results

This section details our approach to the issue of results to students and the provision of advice and guidance.

- *All staff involved have been made aware of the specific arrangements for the issue of results in May/June 2021, including the issuing of AS/A-level and GCSE results in the same week.*
- *Arrangements will be made to ensure the necessary staffing, including exams office and support staff, to enable the efficient receipt and release of results to our students.*
- *Arrangements will be in place for the provision of all necessary advice, guidance and support, including pastoral support, to students on receipt of their results.*
- *Such guidance will include advice on the appeals process in place in 2021 (see below).*
- *Appropriate staff will be available to respond promptly to any requests for information from OxfordAQA for example regarding missing or incomplete results, to enable such issues to be swiftly resolved.*
- *Parents/guardians have been made aware of arrangements for results days.*

Appeals

This section of our Centre Policy outlines our approach to Appeals, to ensure that they are handled swiftly and effectively, and in line with OxfordAQA requirements.

A. Appeals

This section details our approach to managing appeals, including School Reviews, and subsequent appeals to OxfordAQA.

- *All staff involved have been made aware of the arrangements for, and the requirements of, appeals in May/June 2021, as set out in the [OxfordAQA guidance on the determination of grades](#).*
- *Internal arrangements will be in place for the swift and effective handling of School Reviews in compliance with the requirements.*
- *All necessary staff have been briefed on the process for, and timing of, such reviews, and will be available to ensure their prompt and efficient handling.*
- *Leaners have been appropriately guided as to the necessary stages of appeal.*
- *Arrangements will be in place for the timely submission of appeals to OxfordAQA, including any priority appeals, for example those on which university places depend.*
- *Arrangements will be in place to obtain the written consent of students to the initiation of appeals, and to record their awareness that grades may go down as well as up on appeal.*
- *Appropriate information on the appeals process will be provided to parents/carers.*



OXFORD INTERNATIONAL AQA EXAMINATIONS
GREAT CLARENDON STREET, OXFORD, OX2 6DP
UNITED KINGDOM

enquiries@oxfordaqaexams.org.uk
oxfordaqaexams.org.uk